

ready seen, God demands of us, and we profess to give Him, the full devotion of the heart. He is not to be satisfied with any amount of bodily homage. All this may be paid while our hearts are far from Him. He claims the unreserved consecration of the soul in all its powers, and the warm love of the heart; and it is when we cheerfully yield these claims that we prove our faithfulness, and most honour Him. God is a jealous God. He will not permit us to devote to the world or to any object but himself, those affections which are so justly his. He will not permit us to divide our homage. It was his complaint of his professed people of old, that their hearts were divided; and we see from the warning to the Laedicean church how loathsome to God is a lukewarm heart; nay, He threatens the infliction of his severe judgement upon the church of Ephesus, because she had left her first love. From all this it is evident, that in consecrating our whole soul to God, in cultivating the devotion of the heart, we most honour Him. It is not by scaling the heights of heaven, or fathoming the profundity of the abyss; it is not by the achievement of some great enterprise which few have the opportunity of performing; no, it is by a humble, fervent, devoted heart. "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

In cultivating devotion of heart, we not only employ the means most naturally suited to promote the cause of our great Master, but by thus honouring God, we make sure of being honoured by Him in his blessings crowning our exertions. We have referred to the history of those most eminent for success, as showing that their devotion of heart naturally produced this; and we might with equal propriety refer to their case as manifesting, that it was in consequence of his devotion they were so highly honoured of God. Those whom God has employed to do great things for Him have been eminently men of God, and therefore God bore testimony to them as his, and to the word of his grace through them. That your efforts, then, be not in vain, that you may secure the Divine blessing to make them abundantly successful, above all things, brethren, cultivate devotion of heart.

A few words, before concluding, on prayer and meditation as principal means of cultivating this devotion. In

prayer we are more immediately conversant with God. We directly address Him through the mediation of our Great High-Priest. Thus brought into immediate intercourse with the Father of our spirits, and with our glorified Redeemer, we are made to feel our own unworthiness. Drawing near to the presence of the Eternal One, how we appear as nothing, as "less than nothing!" And approaching the thrice Holy One, who cannot look upon sin, how unworthy we feel of his favour—how worthy only of his curse! We see God exalted in his excellency, infinitely worthy of the prostrate devotion of the heart. We feel that our highest powers tasked to the utmost, are an offering altogether inadequate to his claims, and esteem ourselves highly honoured in that He permits our homage. And as the God of our mercies, we see Him conferring benefits on us sinners,—benefits without number, and of inestimable value. And in these we also recognise, and rejoice in acknowledging, his claim to our heart. Prayer, as the principal means of maintaining such views and feelings, is of vital importance to the cultivation of heart devotion. Moreover, it is through prayer that we receive the gifts and graces of the Spirit, on which our advance in piety depends, the institution of Christ being, "Ask, and ye shall receive." The power of the prayer of faith is frequently, in the sacred oracles, brought before us for our excitement. It is mighty with God, and prevails. Everything is promised in answer to it, and nothing is promised apart from it. How important, then, brethren, that you be frequent and fervent in your use of this means of grace! Thereby will you find yourselves increasing in strength and activity, and able to do much for God. Why is it that there are so many pigmy Christians in the church, so much dwarfish Christianity? It is because this all-important means of spiritual growth is much neglected. As Elijah, when refreshed beside the juniper bush, in the strength of the sustenance then furnished to him, pursued his journey through the wilderness to the mount of God, so many Christians appear to think the exercises of their soul when they were first brought to Christ, and the grace which they then received, sufficient for the rest of their pilgrimage, or seek to renew them only at occasional seasons, as, for instance, on